

**Washington, D.C. – Congressman Wally Herger (R-CA), Ranking Member of the Ways & Means Subcommittee on Health, issued the following statement after today’s health care summit at the White House. House and Senate leadership from both parties met with President Obama to discuss health care reform. Herger spoke on the House Floor earlier today calling on the President to pursue true bipartisanship and to start over on the health care bill. You can see his speech [here](#) .**

“Today’s White House summit demonstrated that Republicans have offered a number of substantive solutions for addressing our nation’s health care problems. Despite the President’s announcement earlier this week that he intended to pursue the government-run program against the wishes of the American people, Republicans came to the table in good faith to discuss how best to fix our health care system. With recent news reports highlighting health insurance premium increases as high as 39% for some Californians, both parties should also be able to agree that reining in out-of-control health care costs is a top priority. As Republican members of Congress reminded the President, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office concluded that the Democrats’ bill would result in health insurance premiums rising even faster than they do now. The Republican health plan doesn’t pretend to fix every problem facing our health care system overnight, but it does reduce the cost of health coverage.

“Unfortunately, the President’s reaction to Republicans’ ideas showed that Democrats are still ignoring the American people’s concerns. Instead of being willing to consider targeted reforms, Democrats continue to insist on a massive, complex bill that will inevitably make things worse. And instead of trusting Americans to make the best decisions about their own health care needs, Democrats continue to pursue legislation that puts personal health decisions in the hands of government bureaucrats. It’s long past time for the President and his allies in Congress to start listening to the American people by abandoning this fatally flawed legislation and sincerely working with Republicans to find commonsense solutions to make health care more accessible and affordable.”

## **Background**

Specifically, Congressional Republicans discussed ideas such as allowing small businesses to pool together to get the same advantages as large companies in purchasing health coverage; giving consumers more choices by opening the health insurance market to interstate competition and allowing people to purchase less expensive catastrophic coverage; strengthening high-risk pools and reinsurance programs to provide affordable coverage for

people with pre-existing medical conditions; reducing the cost of health care by eliminating frivolous malpractice lawsuits; and cracking down on waste, fraud, and abuse in Medicare and Medicaid.